



City of Chicago
Richard M. Daley, Mayor



CHICAGO AIRPORT SYSTEM
Department of Aviation
Rosemarie S. Andolino, Commissioner



News Release

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MIDWAY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT HOLDS FULL-SCALE EMERGENCY RESPONSE DISASTER DRILL

CHICAGO – The City of Chicago’s Aviation, Police and Fire Departments, and Office of Emergency Management and Communications (OEMC), conducted a full-scale emergency response disaster drill at Midway International Airport on June 20, 2009.

The airport is required by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to hold a full-scale airport emergency plan exercise at least once every three years.

“The safety of travelers is always the highest priority for Mayor Richard M. Daley and the City of Chicago,” said Aviation Commissioner Rosemarie S. Andolino. “Planning and practice for a major airfield incident is critical to ensuring the success of any emergency response.”

This requirement to test airport/airfield emergency response is mandated by the FAA, and is a condition precedent to U.S. airports’ operating certification by FAA standards. A full-scale crisis plan exercise is required by the FAA under Part 139 of the Federal Aviation Regulations in order to maximize safety at the airport in the event of an emergency.

More than 30 organizations including city departments, state, federal agencies, ambulance and fire companies from surrounding suburbs, as well as operations managers and fire officials from airports throughout North America participated in the drill to test emergency response procedures in the event of a major airfield incident.

“Our firefighters and paramedics are constantly training; this multi-agency disaster drill enhances our preparedness for an actual disaster situation,” said Fire Commissioner John W. Brooks. “A drill such as this gives us an opportunity to test our ongoing training in a more realistic setting, which allows us to better evaluate our readiness and abilities.”

As coordinators of disaster preparedness training for hospitals, the Metropolitan Chicago Healthcare Council once again assisted the city. Volunteers from the Great Lakes Naval Base served as victims in the scenario, with injuries simulated through “moulaging,” a technique that uses theatrical makeup.

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“The Office of Emergency Management and Communications is doing its part to remain alert for any and all emergency situations that may come our way,” said OEMC Executive Director Ray Orozco. “The Midway Airfield Emergency Response Drill gives us an opportunity to practice how various departments would respond during a major incident.”

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), a federal agency that investigates aircraft accidents involving serious injury or substantial property damage, participated in the disaster drill.

The last full-scale exercise at Midway International Airport was in June 2006, and at O’Hare International, a similar required exercise was held in November 2008.

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The Chicago Airport System is self-supporting, using no local or state tax dollars for operations or capital improvements at O’Hare and Midway International airports. Together, Chicago’s airports generate more than \$45 billion in annual economic activity and create 540,000 jobs for the region. Please visit www.flychicago.com to learn more about the Chicago Airport System.

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Attached: Photos from the exercise

PHOTO 1



PHOTO 1 CAPTION: An aircraft simulator was set on fire, and then doused with foam during a preparedness drill at Midway International Airport on June 20, 2009. The airport is mandated by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to hold a drill every three years. More than 30 organizations, including City of Chicago departments, county, state and federal agencies participated in the drill. Volunteers from the Great Lakes Naval Base also participated as “victims” on both the aircraft and on the airfield near it.

Photo: Chicago Dept. of Aviation

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PHOTO 2



PHOTO 2 CAPTION: A volunteer from Great Lakes Naval Base is "mouled" to look like an aircraft emergency victim by another volunteer from the Chicago Metropolitan Healthcare Council during a preparedness drill at Midway International Airport on June 20, 2009. The airport is mandated by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to hold a drill every three years. More than 30 organizations, including City of Chicago departments, county, state and federal agencies participated in the drill.

Photo: Chicago Dept. of Aviation